

1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Note has been prepared by Stone & Meadow Heritage to support a Planning Application for the change of use of the site for dog walking and glamping, including associated works, on land at Lower Green Farm, Ickleford, SG5 3TW (the Site).

1.1 This document should be read in conjunction with other documents submitted as part of a planning application to North Hertfordshire District Council ("the Council"). This document concerns considerations relating to the historic built environment only.

Introduction

1.2 The proposals seek:

Change of Use from Equestrian Land to Dog Walking Facility & Glamping Site

1.3 The level of detail provided within this assessment is "proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance" as set out in Paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Heritage Assets

1.4 Relevant databases and sources (including Historic Environment Records, the National Heritage List for England, historic maps and the Council's website) have been reviewed in order to identify the relevant heritage assets within the context of the site.

1.5 Following this desk based research and analysis, professional judgement has been used to identify and select heritage assets whose significances may be affected by changes to their settings or direct impacts as a result of potential development on the site. The assets which have the potential to be impacted by proposals are:

- 1) Lower Green Farmhouse - Grade II
- 2) North Barn Range at Lower Green Farm - Grade II

Figure 1 - Aerial showing location of Lower Green Farmhouse (yellow) and the barn to the north (orange) with indicative site location in red.



2.0 Map Regression

2.1 An initial review of available historic maps has been undertaken to assist in the understanding of the site's history. Although such cartographic information cannot be considered to be definitive, experience shows that the mapping is often relatively accurate and reliable - particularly the later Ordnance Survey (OS) maps - and taken together with written archival data and physical evidence, can help to refine the history of a site.

2.2 The site has undergone little to no change over the 19th - 21st centuries. The site appears to be in agricultural/paddock use over this time.

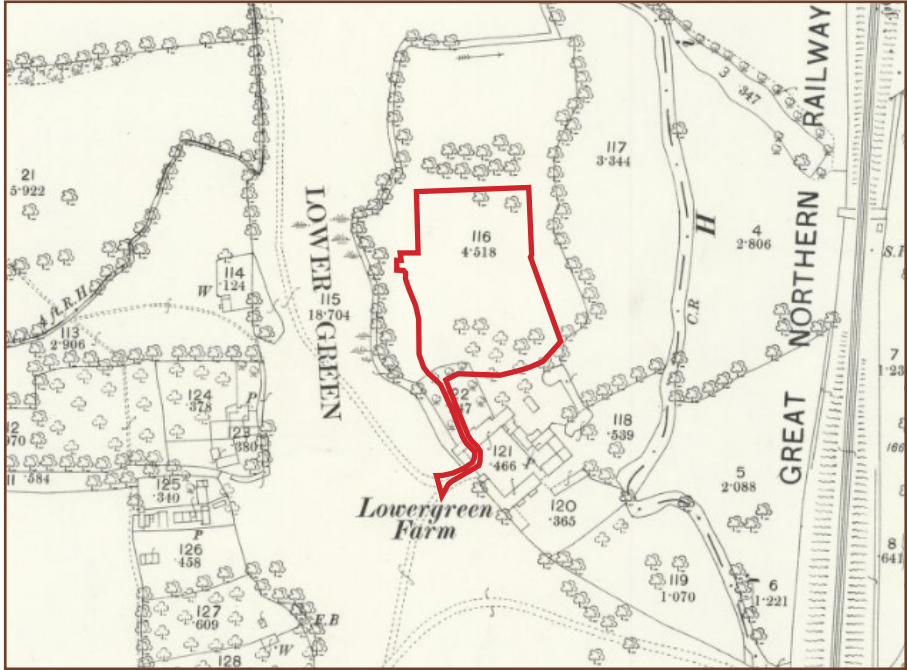


Figure 2 - Extract of Ordnance Survey (OS) map surveyed 1879-81 and published 1882. Indicative site boundary shown in red.

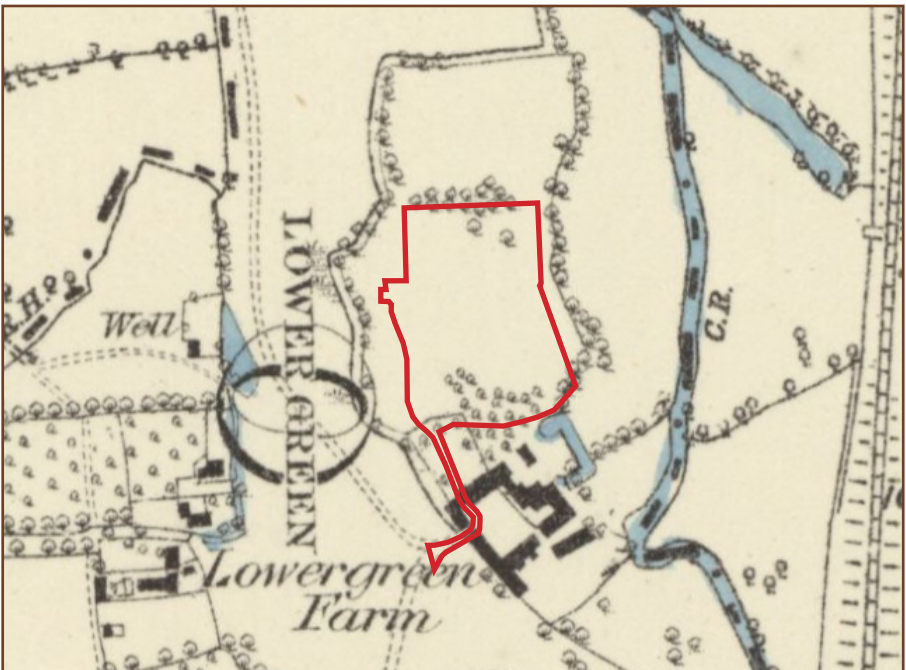


Figure 3 - Extract of OS map surveyed in 1880-81 and published in 1887. Indicative site boundary shown in red.

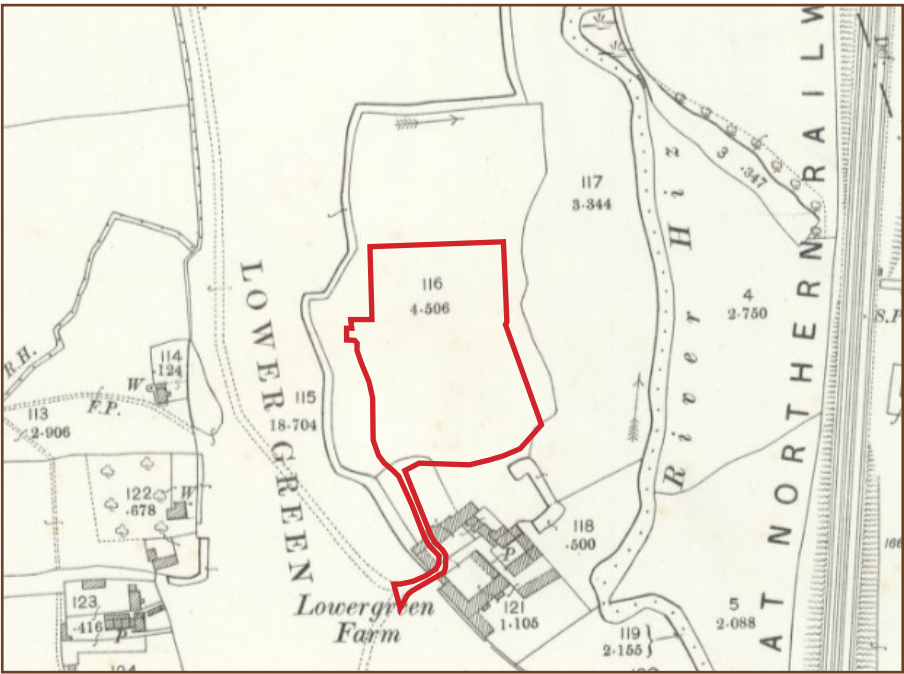


Figure 4 - Extract of OS map revised in 1899 and published in 1901. Indicative site boundary shown in red.



Figure 5 - Extract of OS map revised in 1921 and published in 1922. Indicative site boundary shown in red.

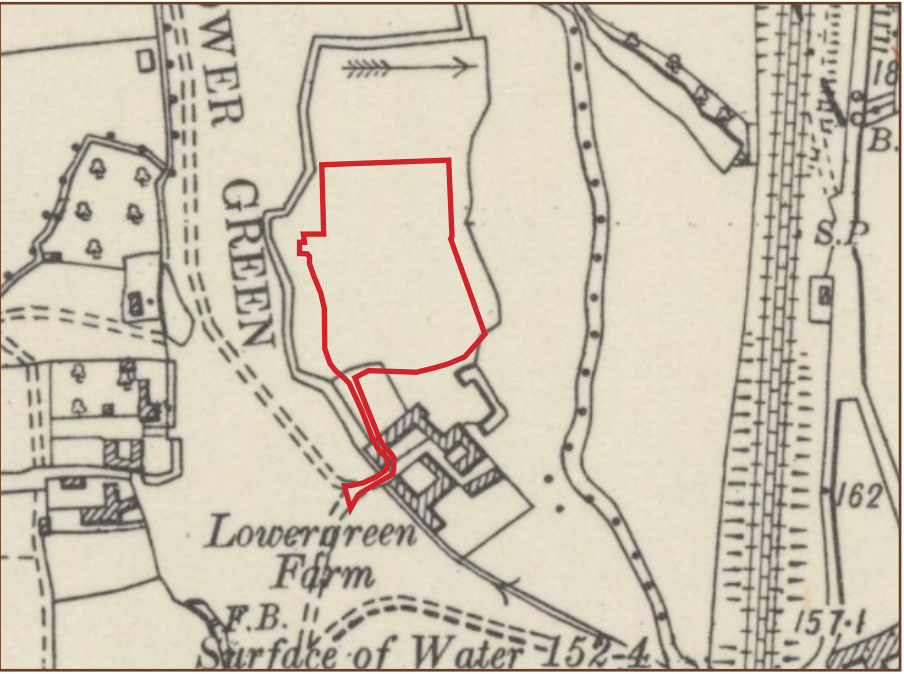


Figure 6 - Extract of OS map revised in 1948 and published in 1950. Indicative site boundary shown in red.



Figure 7 - Extract of OS map survey/revised pre 1930-1970 and published in 1970. Indicative site boundary shown in red.



Figure 8 - 1954 aerial showing Lower Green Farm and site to the north.

3.0 Significance

- 3.1 Significance can be defined as a collection of values which forms a building/structure/place's *"heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic"* - *NPPF Glossary*. Understanding the significance of a building or place is fundamental in successfully managing change.
- 3.2 The significance level of an asset (building/structure/area and its setting), for the purposes of this report, can be graded between very high, high, moderate, low, negligible, neutral, none or detrimental where:
- Very High Significance is attributable to an asset (World Heritage Sites, Grade I and II* Listed Buildings, Registered Park and Gardens, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments) which is of international importance and/or outstanding evidential, aesthetic, historic and/or communal value).
 - High Significance is attributable to an asset (Grade I and II* Listed Buildings, Registered Park and Gardens, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments) which is of high evidential, aesthetic, historic and/or communal value.
 - Moderate Significance is attributed to an asset (Grade II Listed Buildings, Registered Park and Gardens, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, locally listed buildings and other non-designated assets) which of good/strong evidential, aesthetic, historic and/or communal value.
 - Low Significance is attributable to an asset (Grade II Listed Buildings, Registered Park and Gardens, Conservation Areas, Scheduled

Monuments, locally listed buildings and other non-designated assets) which have lower/typical level of quality, a lower degree of preservation/integrity and/or survival of contextual associations. Low significance does not equate to 'no' significance.

- Negligible Significance is attributed to assets which (Listed Buildings, Registered Park and Gardens, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, locally listed and other non-designated assets) with some evidence of value but in an incoherent or eroded form of local interest are of such limited quality in their fabric or historical association that this is not appreciable.
- No/Neutral Significance elements typically do not possess any heritage values.
- Unknown Significance is attributed to assets (or areas/rooms within an asset) which are inaccessible and may hold some potential for hidden significance.
- Detrimental elements are attributed to items which are intrusive to heritage value have characteristics which detract.

Lower Green Farm

- 3.3 Lower Green Farmhouse was first listed, at Grade II, in October 1988 (NHLE: 1174403). The list description reads as follows:
- 3.4 The list description is as follows:
- Farmhouse. C17 or earlier. Timber framed roughcast with steep old red tile roofs. A long irregular building set at rear of farmyard facing W. Tall 2-storeys central block with rear outshut, very large chimney in S half, one flush 3-lights casement window to each floor. Lower 2-storeys part at S end with a 2-lights casement window to each floor. Entrance by gabled porch into single-storey N part with N gable chimney. Main chimney with pilaster strips above roof.*
- 3.5 Hill Farm derives its significance from its age and surviving historic fabric. There have been a number of alterations to the property in the 21st century. It is currently not inhabited and is in a state of dormancy. The building is of architectural and historic interest as it is an example of a 17th century farmhouse. Although the building has been altered the architectural style and constructional detailing of the original design are still apparent and significantly add to the interest of the building. The building demonstrates the craftsmanship of the period.
- 3.6 The setting of the building is formed by its immediate farmyard complex as well as the verdant character of the surrounding fieldscapes. The context of the building has been altered during the 20th century through improvements to infrastructure and modern houses being constructed within the wider area however, it still retains a strong connection with its agricultural context.
- 3.7 The site is located to the north-west of the farmhouse. As a result of the intervening built form of the north barn range and mature vegetation there is only a limited awareness of the site.

Site

- 3.8 The proposed site is located to the north of the farmhouse. Due to the presence of mature vegetation and the barn to the north there is limited to no visual awareness of the site. It does however form part of the wider field system surrounding the farm.

North Barn Range at Lower Green Farm

- 3.9 North Barn Range at Lower Green Farm was first listed, at Grade II, in October 1988 (NHLE: 1103229). The list description reads as follows:
- 3.10 The list description is as follows:
- Range of 2 barns. C17. Timber frame, dark weatherboarded, some brick infill, and old red tile roofs. A range of 2 barns on N side of yard, adjoining N end of farmhouse, facing S. W part a 4-bays tall barn with double doors in 2nd bay from W and outshut to rear (N) of same bay. Smaller double doors in E bay and to E part of range.*
- 3.11 The barn derives its significance from its age and surviving historic fabric. The larger barn is currently used for storage whilst the smaller range has undergone some modernisation for accommodation.
- 3.12 The buildings retain a vernacular appearance and provide evidence of farm buildings from the 18th century. The group value between the farmhouse and barn strengthens the overall value.
- 3.13 The setting of the building is formed by its immediate farmyard setting as well as the verdant character of the surrounding fieldscapes.
- 3.14 The site is located to the north-west of the barns. Due to existing mature vegetation views of the access road will be possible however awareness of the shepherds huts and parking for the dog walking field will be limited to none.



Figure 9 - Partial view of Lower Green Farmhouse



Figure 10 - Rear elevation of northern barn range.

4.0 Proposals

This section should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans and the Planning Statement prepared by Brown & co.

- 4.1 The proposals seek the change of Use from Equestrian Land to Dog Walking Facility & Glamping Site alongside 2 no. small areas of car parking, new access road, fencing and 5 shepherds huts.

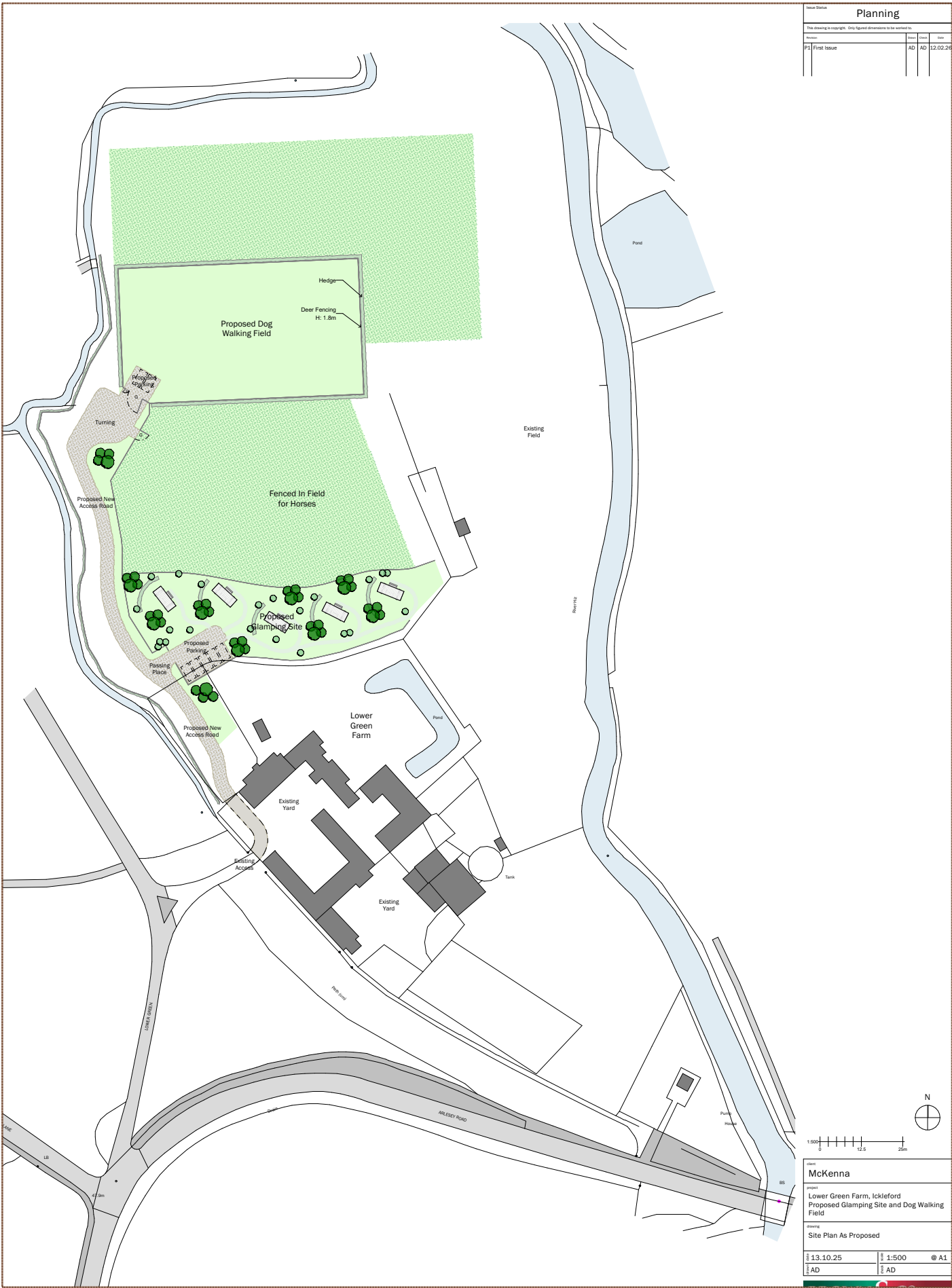


Figure 11 - Proposed site plan (Brown & Co).

5.0 Impact

In order to assess the suitability of the site for the proposed development, it is necessary to determine the nature and extent of any impacts resulting from the proposal on heritage assets and/ or their settings.

- 5.1 Section 66(1) reads “*In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.*”
- Lower Green Farmhouse and north range barn**
- 5.2 Due to the proximity of the listed buildings to one another and their similar relationship with the site, impacts on their setting have been considered together below.
- 5.3 Whilst the setting of a heritage asset can be a fundamental contributor to its significance, it should be noted that ‘setting’ itself is not a designation. The value of setting lies in its contribution it makes to the significance of an asset. In this instance, the site in its current form makes a positive contribution to the setting of the listed buildings as a result of its verdant character.
- 5.4 Impact on setting is measured in terms of the effect that the impact has on the significance of the asset itself – rather than setting itself being considered as the asset. It is apparent that the proposals will result in a degree of ‘change’ to the setting of the building but, in accordance with Historic England’s The Setting of Heritage Assets – Planning Note 3, ‘change’ does not in itself imply harm, and it can be neutral, positive or negative in effect.
- 5.5 Historic England’s ‘Conservation Principles’ reinforces this change can be neutral, positive or negative in nature and it is only harmful if (and to the extent that) the asset’s significance is reduced. Just because something is visible does not mean it is inherently harmful.
- 5.6 The construction of the proposed shepherds huts and small area of car parking for the use of the huts will result in an increased awareness of the built form on site. However, the proposals are small scale in nature and have been positioned to limit any visual awareness. The huts nestle against the existing vegetation, with some elements of additional landscaping proposed, screening them in direct views, providing privacy to the listed buildings and vice versa.
- 5.7 They represent a very small addition to the wider field, ensuring the overall verdant appearance of the field is retained. Therefore, the key green characteristics, which positively contribute to the setting of Lower Green Farm, are maintained. The design of the huts are simple in nature and the proposed colouring is proposed to match that of the barn. The huts can also be easily removed at a later date with very limited impact.
- 5.8 The dog walking area, and car parking for its use, are located to the north of the site creating a significant buffer between this element of the proposals and the listed buildings. The proposed fencing and hedging screen the activity within the area from view and helps to integrate the area with the wider green field. Much like the huts, the fencing/hedge can be easily removed at a later date, if required, with very limited impact.
- 5.9 The access road will pass the barn on its south-western side but this is not considered to impact its special interest due to the existing active nature of the farm yard. Further to this, the proposed uses are not intensive maintaining a clear sense of the quiet and pleasant setting of the buildings.
- 5.10 Overall, as a result of the careful consideration of the positioning and scale of the proposals alongside the type of use proposed the scheme will have a neutral impact on the contribution the site makes to the setting of the listed buildings and is therefore not in conflict with either the National or Local policies.

6.0 Conclusion

This note considers the impact of the proposed scheme on the significance of the built heritage assets identified, including the contribution made by their settings where appropriate.

- 6.1 This approach to impact-assessment is required in order to satisfy the provisions of Sections 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act of 1990 in relation to listed buildings and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) where the impact of development on heritage assets or their settings is being considered (Paragraphs 207-221).
- 6.2 As a result of our assessments on site, it is considered that the proposed scheme has a neutral impact on Lower Green Farmhouse and the north barn range.
- 6.3 The scheme is therefore considered to be compliant with the national and local planning policies and section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and we therefore see no reason why the application should not be viewed favourably by the council from a heritage perspective.

